

## MSFC Orientation Script

### **Introduction**

- Your name
- Welcome new employees to the Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC)

### **Purpose**

- To provide information which will assist you as a new employee of MSFC
- To provide a brief summary of the many fringe benefits Civil Service employment has to offer
- To inform you of your working hours
- To discuss your relationship with your supervisor and your responsibilities as an employee
- To inform you of the role of the Personnel Office

### **Role of the Personnel Office**

Provides assistance to management officials and employees in the areas of:

- Employee relations
- Grievances
- Complaints
- Recruiting
- Incentive awards
- Position and Pay Management
- Training
- Career Development
- Labor Relations

### **Types of Appointments**

#### ***Career-Conditional***

- Hired from OPM Register, Direct Hire Authority, or reinstated non-competitively
- Must serve for 3 years without break in service for conversion eligibility to career appointment
- Termination before receipt of career appointment. May be reinstated without competition for 3 years.
- Veterans – no time limit on reinstatement.
- Military time does not apply to career appointment. Only counts toward total service for retirement and leave accrual purposes

#### ***Career Appointment***

- Attained after 3 years of substantially continuous employment
- Termination after receipt of career tenure- reinstatement eligibility without time limit

#### ***Temporary limited appointment***

- Limited for a specific time not to exceed one year
- No reduction in force protection
- Not eligible for health benefits

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### **Probationary Period**

- All career-conditional employees must serve 1-year probationary period
- Must be recommended by supervisor for retention in federal service
- May be separated without undue formality if circumstances warrant
- Co-op conversion must serve probationary period

### **Hours of Duty**

#### ***MSFC Flexitour Program***

- Provides for basic 40 hour workweek consisting of 5 eight hour days
- Hours must be worked between 07:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday with a 30 minute lunch period (give example of 15 minute increments)
- Selected Flexitour must be approved by supervisor
- May be changed with supervisory approval. Two week notice required, form available for this purpose

### **Tardiness**

- Can be excused up to 59 minutes with justifiable reason
- Should be a rare situation

### **Lunch Period**

- You have 30 minutes for lunch
- Extended lunch period – covered by Union agreement, which you have copy of in new-hire folder

### **Rest Periods**

- Only when authorized for health reasons (fatigue potential, confined working area, or other justifiable reasons)
- May not exceed 15 minutes during each continuous 4 hours of work

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### **Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)**

Requires payment of overtime for certain positions if employees occupying them are required to perform overtime work

#### Overtime

- For exempt employees (those not subject to FLSA) if your basic pay does not exceed the minimum rate of basic pay for GS-10 the overtime rate is 1 and ½ times the hourly rate of basic pay. If your basic pay exceeds GS-10/1 overtime pay is limited to 1 and ½ times the rate of a GS-10/1
- For non-exempt employees (those subject to the FLSA) overtime pay is 1 and ½ times the basic hourly rate
- Part-time employees are eligible for overtime on the same basis as full-time employees
- Standard Form 50 (Notification of Personnel Action) and Position Description indicates exempt or non-exempt (entitlement to overtime)

### **Compensatory Time (Comp time)**

Compensatory time is time off in lieu of overtime pay

- As a general rule, and to the extent permitted by law, both exempt and non-exempt employees shall be required to take compensatory time in lieu of pay for irregular or occasional overtime worked
- Compensatory time in lieu of overtime pay shall be granted when requested by an employee
- Must be used no later than the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> pay period following the pay period which comp time was earned (Only for compelling reasons can exemptions to the 7<sup>th</sup> full pay period limitation be authorized)

### **Annual Leave**

Earned and used for

- Vacations
- Emergency purposes
- Personal business

Accrual

- Less than 3 years of service – 4 hours per pay period = 13 days per year
- 3 to 15 years of service – 6 hours per pay period = 19.5 days per year
- Over 15 years of service – 8 hours per pay period = 26 days per year
- Balance shown on "Statement of Earnings" each pay period
- Maximum carry-over from one year to the next is 240 hours
- Explain how A/L is advanced, when it can be taken (immediately) and what happens if separated owing leave

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### Use

- Must be approved in advance
- Approval can not be presumed
- Must contact supervisor to request emergency leave

### **Sick Leave**

#### To be used when

- Incapacitated to do the job
- Exposed to contagious disease
- Required to care for family member with contagious disease
- Dental, optical, or medical exam

#### Accrual

- 4 hours earned each pay period or 13 days per year
- No limit on cumulative amount
- Not advanced at the beginning of the year like annual leave
- Not actually earned until the end of the pay period
- Balance is shown on "Statement of Earnings" each pay period

#### Use

- Notify supervisor as soon as possible
- No later than 4 hours from start of work day
- Medical/optical/dental appointments scheduled in advance
- Absences of more than 3 days requires a doctor's statement

#### Recredit

- Unused sick leave is recredited to your account after a break in service not in excess of 3 years
- If you have more than 3 years break, sick leave is lost

### **Holidays**

10 paid holidays each year; must be in pay status either day before or day after holiday to receive holiday pay

- New Years Day (January)
- Martin Luther King Day (January)
- Washington's Birthday (February)
- Memorial Day (May)
- July 4th (July)
- Labor Day (September)
- Columbus Day (October)
- Veteran's Day (November)
- Thanksgiving (November)
- Christmas (December)

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### **Excused Absence**

Administratively authorized without loss of pay or leave time

Examples

- Blood donation
- Taking non-competitive exams
- Attending work-related conferences

### **Military Leave**

- Up to 15 calendar days leave each year
- No loss of pay or leave for active duty for training purposes

### **Court Leave**

No loss of pay for

- Jury Duty
- Court proceedings in a non-official capacity as witness for state or local government

### **Leave Without Pay**

Temporary leave granted upon request of employee and approved by management

Examples

- Maternity leave
- Leave to look for another position while changing geographic areas, etc

### **Absence Without Leave (AWOL)**

- Any leave for which approval was not granted
- May be grounds for disciplinary action

### **Employee Services and Benefits**

#### ***Personnel Development***

##### ***Counseling***

- Work related problems – discuss with supervisor
- Performance problems compounded by personal problems – discuss with Employee Assistance Coordinator in Personnel Office
- Training Psychologist available in Personnel Office, records kept confidential

##### ***Training***

- Job related short course provided by MSFC
- On the job training provided
- Training bulletins are distributed in each organization, bulletin boards, and published in the Marshall Star
- In certain cases, tuition assistance for college is provided

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### ***Employee Compensation (Federal Employee Compensation Act)***

- Provides compensation and medical care for disability due to personal injuries sustained while on the job
- All injuries must be reported to supervisor and Medical Center ASAP

### ***Retirement System***

- Currently, a mandatory 7% of your salary is contributed to retirement
- Deducted each 2 weeks, with cumulative total reflected on "Statement of Earnings"
- Retirement fund can be withdrawn upon resignation. Does not accrue interest
- Withdrawal amount can be repaid if reinstated
- Disability retirement available to career and career-conditional employees only

### ***Requirements for Retirement (Presently)***

- 30 years service at age 55
- 20 years service at age 60
- 5 years service at age 62
- Retirement coordinator available if needed

### **Unemployment Compensation**

- Eligible if employment is terminated other than for cause by the agency
- Amount received and length of payments varies with earnings and length of time worked

### **Medical Center**

- Provides annual physical examination (voluntary at no cost)
- Examines employees for fitness for duty
- Provides emergency treatment
- Furnishes medical records to your personal physician upon request

### **Credit Union**

- Everyone eligible to join
- Branch Officer in building 4200
- Payroll deductions can be authorized

### **Carpools and Parking**

- Carpools encouraged and provided parking spaces
- Office Chiefs and handicapped employees are also furnished parking spaces
- You can be ticketed by Security for unauthorized parking
- Points are assessed for parking violations, speeding, etc.
- Driving privileges suspended for excess points in a 2-year period

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### **Eating Facilities**

- Cafeterias are in buildings 4200, 4610, 4487, 4471 and 4708
- Snack bars are in buildings 4200, 4664, 4666, and 4712

### **MARS**

- MSFC employee organization
- Provides recreation, social, and athletic activities
- Offers services in such areas as life insurance, bulk buying, etc (Example: discount coupons for Disney World)
- Sponsors annual employee picnic
- Currently 25 employee activities
- Listed in the MSFC phone directory under "clubs"

### **Marshall Star**

- News publication covering current MSFC and NASA activities
- Includes no-cost employee Want Ads
- Job opportunities section
- Published each Wednesday

### **Position Classification**

- First line supervisor assigns duties and writes position description
- Business professional, Engineers, and clerical positions are referred to as Class Act or GS
- Trades and Crafts are referred to as WG (Wage Grade)
- Position descriptions are evaluated by Personnel Office to determine appropriate grade

### **Pay Determination**

#### ***Base Pay***

- Initial appointment made at minimum rate of grade
- Reinstatement shall be given benefit of highest previous rate, to the extent permitted by law (give example)

#### ***Within-Grade Increase***

- Level of competence must be determined acceptable before within grade increase can be given
- Ten steps in each grade. Current waiting periods are:
  - 52 calendar weeks (1 year) of creditable service for steps 2,3, or 4
  - 104 calendar weeks (2 years) of creditable service for steps 5, 6, or 7
  - 156 calendar weeks (3 years) of creditable service for steps 8, 9, or 10
- Copies of current pay scales are available for regular GS and Engineers (GS-800, 5 through 11)

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### **Quality Increases**

- Additional with-grade-increase in recognition of high quality performance
- Eligible for one quality increase within a 52 week period

### **Pay Periods and Pay Days**

- Paid on a 26 pay period cycle
- Payday every other Wednesday (Give example of when check may be received)
- Checks are mailed to the bank of your choice or to your home address
- Deductions can be made for direct deposit to savings institutions, etc.
- Form can be sent to Payroll for desired changes
- Required Deductions – Federal and State Taxes
- Reflected on your earnings statement
- Amount withheld depends on dependents and salary
  - Retirement at 7%
  - FICA (Federal Income Contribution Act) or Social Security, 1.3% on annual wages up to \$35,700
  - If applicable, Health Insurance Premiums and FEGLI (Federal Employee Group Life Insurance)
  - Union dues (if you choose to join a Union)
  - Bonds can be deducted as well as deductions for direct deposit to savings institutions
  - Bond purchases may be arranged through the Payroll Savings Plan

### **Security**

- Two types of clearances – Secret and Confidential
- Identification badges should be worn at all times and only during working hours
- Report loss of badges to Security
- Each car must display a NASA or other appropriate decal issued by Security
- Faded decals must be replaced
- If car is traded, etc. remove decal and turn it in to Security



## **MSFC Orientation Script**

### **Responsibilities of Employee**

- Cooperate with supervisors and coworkers
- Work a full 8 hour day with ½ hour lunch break
- Do not use your official position for private gain
- Any outside employment – you must be in compliance with the requirements of NHB 1900.1B Standards of Conduct for NASA Employees (yellow booklet in your pre-appointment package)
- Pay all just financial obligations
- Report any change of name by legal change, marriage or divorce to the Personnel Office
- Review your official personnel folder at least annually and update as necessary. 201 files are located in Personnel, Building 4200, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor
- MSFC training is automatically placed in file; employee must submit other

### **Performance Appraisal for Non-Supervisory Employees (annual rating)**

The primary objectives of the appraisal system are to:

- Increase communications and feedback
- Provide a framework for individual development
- Improve individual and organizational planning and execution
- Provide a basis for training, rewarding, reassigning, promoting, reducing in grade, retaining, and removing employees
- Encourage coaching and counseling to maintain and improve performance

#### ***Positions Covered***

- All General Schedule employees (non-supervisory)
- All federal Wage employees (non-supervisory)
- Appraisal period
- Appraisal of job performance will be made annually in writing

#### ***Progress Review***

- Identify and resolve problems that constitute obstacles to performance which are beyond the employee's control
- Review progress to-date toward the planned level of achievement
- Provide interview feedback on performance and examine ways to improve the existing level of performance

#### ***Ratings***

- The final step in appraisal process is the assignment of an overall rating which will serve as an index to the employee performance in the total position

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### **Promotions Under the Merit System**

- You may apply for a job vacancy announcement posted on bulletin boards and listed in the Marshall Star under the heading of "Job Opportunities"
- Merit promotions are generally those positions with promotion potential and professional (career ladder) promotion

### **Incentive Awards**

- Sustained Superior Performance – at least 6 months in the same position and covers one or more of the most important major duties. Monetary amount depends on grade of employee
- OPR – Outstanding in all major duties for 12 month period. Not a monetary award. Retention in RIF
- Group Achievement – Given to group of employees for exceptional service or group accomplishment
- Suggestion – Cash awards for money-saving suggestions

### **Disciplinary Actions**

- Discipline is utilized to correct undesirable behavior
- NASA policy – To impose the minimum penalty necessary to correct the behavior
- Examples – letters of reprimand, suspension, and removal

### **Grievances**

- You may grieve any matter which you feel is unjust
- Managers/supervisors – use NASA grievance system
- Non-supervisory employees – applicable negotiated grievance procedures (MESA or AFGE)

### **Appeals**

- Appeals channels are available in the event of adverse action

### **Unions**

- Listed in the MSFC directory
- MESA – Engineering and scientific personnel, excluding management officials
- AFGE – All employees except those engaged in managerial capacity, personnel work (other than purely clerical), Labor Relations, Supervisory, Professional (Engineers, Accountants, Attorneys, Mathematicians, Physicists), Military, Co-ops, Public Law 313, Temporary, Consultants, and Experts

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### **Privacy Act**

- Prohibits the release of certain personal information without permission of the employee
- Freedom of Information Act releases certain information if properly requested by the interested party

### **Hatch Act**

- Prohibits certain political activity
- Check with the Personnel Office prior to participating in any political activity

### **Veterans' Preference Act**

- Provides for special in-hiring preference for persons having served in the Armed Services during periods covered by the law
- Also grants superior retention rights over non-veterans during reduction in force
- No preference is granted for training
- Must have 180 days of active duty for non-training purposes

### **Resignation**

- Two weeks notice normally expected
- Exceptions can be made when circumstances warrant

### **Health Insurance**

- Effective first pay period after receipt of application in Personnel Office

### **Life Insurance**

- Covered immediately, if elected

### **ISO9000**